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# Church: CIA Opened Nixon, Ted Mail

By JOSEPH VOLZ

Washington, Sept. 24 (News Bureau)—Sen. Frank Church (D-Idaho), chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, revealed today for a number of years the CIA secretly opened the mail of prominent political leaders, including Richard Nixon, Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Church himself.

Church told a committee hearing that the agency had maintained a file marked "Selected American Politicians" that contained letters written to or from the American leaders from overseas. He said that committee investigators were just beginning to study the files and gave no estimate of how many letters were opened.

Church gave one example involving a letter sent to Nixon in 1968, when he was running for the presidency. One of Nixon's speech writers, Raymond K. Price, was traveling in the Soviet Union and wrote back discussing campaign strategy.

## Another Letter From Soviet

Church was vague on the opening of the letter sent to Kennedy. He said that it involved a message sent to the senator from the Soviet Union. A Kennedy spokesman said that a letter apparently from a Soviet citizen was sent to the senator in 1968, thanking him for information about a U.S.-Soviet health exchange program.

Church said that while touring the Soviet Union in 1971, he wrote back to his mother-in-law, Mrs. Chase Clark, in Boise,

Idaho, and that the letter was opened.

Others whose mail was opened, according to Church, were Sen. Hubert Humphrey (D-Minn.), Rep. Bella Abzug (D-Manhattan), Federal Reserve Board Chairman Arthur F. Burns, former West Virginia Secretary of State Jay Rockefeller, nephew of Vice President Rockefeller, and slain civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Church's revelations overshadowed the rambling testimony of James Angleton, once the CIA's top counterspy until he was forced into retirement by Director William E. Colby last year amid press reports of the agency's illegal domestic spying.

Angleton, who had headed the mail-opening program since 1955, conceded that it was "illegal." Asked why the agency wanted to read Nixon's mail, he said it was an "error." He did not elaborate.



Associated Press Photos  
Chairman Frank Church (left) and witness James Angleton, former chief of CIA counterintelligence division, at Senate hearing.